



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060-1219; FR ID 78050]

Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission Under Delegated Authority

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees. The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

DATES: Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email PRA@fcc.gov and to nicole.ongele@fcc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information about the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele, (202) 418-2991.

OMB Control Number: 3060-1219.

Title: Connect America Fund-Alternative Connect America Cost Model Support.

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents and Responses: 1,100 unique respondents; 1,100 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 0.5 hours - 2 hours.

Frequency of Response: On occasion and one-time reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. sections 151-154, 155, 201-206, 214, 218-220, 251, 252, 254, 256, 303(r), 332, 403, 405, 410, and 1302.

Total Annual Burden: 700 hours.

Total Annual Cost: No Cost.

Privacy Act Impact Assessment: No impact(s).

Nature and Extent of Confidentiality: The Commission notes that the Universal Service Administrative Company must preserve the confidentiality of all data obtained from respondents; must not use the data except for purposes of administering the universal service programs; and must not disclose data in company-specific form unless directed to do so by the Commission.

Needs and Uses: The Commission is requesting approval for the extension of this collection. In March 2016, the Commission adopted significant reforms to place the universal service support program on solid footing for the next decade to preserve and advance voice and broadband service in areas served by rate-of-return carriers. *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, Report and Order, Order and Order on Reconsideration, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 16-33 (*2016 Rate-of-Return Reform Order*).

As part of the *Rate-of-Return Reform Order*, the Commission adopted a voluntary path for rate-of-return carriers to receive model-based support in exchange for making a commitment to deploy broadband-capable networks meeting certain service obligations to a pre-determined number of eligible locations in a state. By creating a voluntary pathway to model-based support, the Commission will spur new broadband deployment in rural areas. In several subsequent orders and public notices, the Commission has further refined this voluntary pathway, and in the *December 2018 Rate-of-Return Reform Order*, the Commission adopted a second pathway for carriers that did not elect the first pathway. *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; Developing a Unified Inter-carrier Compensation Regime*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, Report and Order, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Order on Reconsideration, FCC 18-176 (*December 2018 Rate-of-Return Reform Order*).

This information collection addresses the requirement that carriers electing model-based support must notify the Commission of that election and their commitment to satisfy the specific service obligations associated with the amount of model support.

In the *2016 Rate-of-Return Reform Order*, the Commission also adopted reforms to the universal service mechanisms used to determine support for rate-of-return carriers not electing model-based support.

Among other such reforms, the Commission adopted an operating expense limitation to improve carriers' incentives to be prudent and efficient in their expenditures, a capital investment allowance to better target support to those areas with less broadband deployment, and broadband deployment obligations to promote "accountability from companies receiving support to ensure that public investment are used wisely to deliver intended results." In the *December 2018 Rate-of-Return Order*, the Commission further modified or, in the case of the capital investment allowance, eliminated these requirements. Other requirements adopted in the *Rate-of-Return Reform Order* have been addressed under other Office of Management and Budget control numbers.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

Marlene Dortch,
Secretary.
Office of the Secretary.

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